

4-3-1846

Letter from Sarah Whitney, Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Anne Whitney, New York, New York, 1846 April 3

Sarah Whitney

Wellesley College Archives

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.wellesley.edu/whitney_correspondence

Recommended Citation

Whitney, Sarah and Wellesley College Archives, "Letter from Sarah Whitney, Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Anne Whitney, New York, New York, 1846 April 3" (1846). *Papers of Anne Whitney (MSS.4): Correspondence*. 2059.
https://repository.wellesley.edu/whitney_correspondence/2059

This Correspondence is brought to you for free and open access by the Papers of Anne Whitney (MSS.4) at Wellesley College Digital Scholarship and Archive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Papers of Anne Whitney (MSS.4): Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Wellesley College Digital Scholarship and Archive. For more information, please contact ir@wellesley.edu.


Cambridge City April 3^d 1846.

How sorry am I dearest that I could not let you have a letter from home this week as you desire it so much - but my evil spirit has had the ascendancy these few days past, & this is only one of the penalties thereof. Was your letter to Lizzy meant for an April fool joke or serious earnest? this is the question that has haunted me day & night since its receipt, till yesterday, when I came to the wise conclusion that I was a "fool" at any rate, & would trouble myself no longer in regard to your intentions, & if you should in your next declare yourself a member in full communion of the Roman Catholic Church, even then "sufficient unto the day would be the evil thereof." The explanation which I looked for yesterday, came in last night's dream, in a closely written letter of about two hundred pages going over the whole ground of theological controversy, from reading of which I was happily delivered by (blessings upon her for the good habit, though I have scolded about the early retiring) Lizzy's early rising. As you say nothing more upon it, I hope to be able to dismiss the horrible night mare & tell you of all that has happened, good, bad & indifferent since Sunday, hoping the former will so far preponderate that you can forgive the inanimateness of the recital, without any farther confessions of my folly. To go back Monday evng, father, mother & Lizzy went to a juvenile concert, the wonderful harmony, both vocal & spiritual which prevailed can be better be described by one who was present - so I leave it for Lizzy - Edward & I were sitting quietly reading when in walked Leonard - "Hodge do. where is Cousin Anne. Is she never coming home. I hope ~~hope~~ we shall have some hot weather pretty soon to drive her home." He was tired, I blue but we made out to get through the song without a nap from him or the dropsy (Lizzy's favorite phrase) from me. I fear I alarmed him by asking him to go to hear Parker on fast day, for we have not seen him since. Tuesday, to drive away thought, I made 13 calls - among the number 1 on Mrs Wil-

kins who sent much love, Mrs Swett who was not at home, Mrs Lamberts
& found them better, &c. &c. whose names you will not care to hear. Miss
Seymour came in the long to beat Cat chess but went home at ten o'clock
most thoroughly beaten & tired. - - Ned, Bob, Uncle & Aunt Inger fresh
& Uncle Mrs family came to tea - all exceedingly stupid - so said Mother &
she is not used to make such remarks. Kate, Larry & Emory came in the
evening & they too were sleepy - next time we are so dull, think I will make
a tea kettle full of thoroughbred tea to treat the company & drive away
spring vapours. I did not hear a single attempt at April fooling during
the day. At sunset the weather was so breezy, I stole a ten minutes run
which the folks thought me engaged getting tea & felt less of a stupid
headache which had been troubling me through the day. - Yesterday being
fast was a much better day. We met at the breakfast table looking
bright & feeling well. Various plans were proposed for the day - the
following put into execution. Father & Mother after calling upon Aunt Cook
went to hear Mr Ellis preach from the 5th verse of the 74th Psalm. - Look at the
text. - Edw, Lizzy & I went to Mr Robbins' beautiful church & heard him
preach a good - not extra sermon upon moral & spiritual progress -
was glad I went however, & have got this good at least a resolution to eat
less - a good one for fast was it not? P.M. I went to bed thoroughly tired. Edw
& Lizzy to Mr Barretts School Anniversary. Mother down to Mr Lamberts &
Father to sleep - then by & by Mrs Lambert called to visit her after a walk,
Mrs James Hastings to make a farewell visit as she is going to move to Vermont
in a week or two. Am glad for their health sake that they are going. Should
be more glad if they wd take some of their relatives with them. In the
evening to complete their dissipation, E & I went over with Mr to Dr Gannetts church
& heard the delightful E. Peabody preach upon preperism - its causes & its
cure. never did man, so simply & so powerfully make me to feel how much
can & must be done in the operation of the invincible law of cause & effect - that as

he showed a train of causes working to produce inevitably pauperism, our duty is to put in operation other trains that will as certainly counteract it, which can to a great extent be done now, thus saving us from the terrible fate of older cities, where the evil has become too great for man to grapple with. The Ministry at large is doing a noble work - strange that self-interest alone does not awaken deeper interest in our degraded fellow beings - If it does not, combined with such preaching as Mr P's, I am sure I know of no power that can. - We waked this morning bright & well notwithstanding the fatigue of yesterday, better for fast (of horrible the joked man) & fasting to be better. After breakfast father came back to say that Aunt Call's house was burnt in the night. It proves to be only the back part & can be repaired at the cost of 100 dollars which the relations will gladly furnish. The dear old lady was found by father & Edw'd at a near neighbor, well & cheerful, having been carried in her bed by 2 or 3 men, without injury, though a good deal alarmed. Poor Hannah was awaked by the cry "Aunt Call your house is all on fire." What a terrible fright for her, shut up in the house with those three aged people. They have so many kind friends they will lose nothing that money can furnish. I have been to carry Mrs L's better. How sad am I that I should have been so misunderstood. Mother you would call well if you were here & I told you of her health, better as I thought than when you left, because you particularly asked about it. She is more careful of her diet & consequently better than she used to be. It is too nonsensical to talk of my health when that fast days resolution stands before you. When I am sick you know mother's standing complaint is that I cannot eat. She has not even dreamed of making the complaint this season. I am sure we have the most reason to be troubled by your accounts of head ache & sleepiness - do take some thorough wort or wormwood, or something to make you less bilious, and go to bed at 10 o'clock & get up at or before 6. - My mental & only infirmity no medicine can reach - else would I take an ocean fall, & no one should be more

blessed by its operation than you my dearest sister - then should you not understand me as uttering hard thoughts for having failed to write to our friends, when such never entered my mind - I delivered the message as nearly as I could remember it with the wish that they might be gratified as they were this afternoon - It indeed seemed to give them much joy & they needed it for Mr L having lost his sleep last night, & being more unwell to day ~~they~~ were somewhat dispirited - Mrs Hayes & Wilmmeray came in soon after I did & I hope did them good - As I came away they asked me to come down again tomorrow to read your & last letters which they have not heard - They were delighted as is every body but me at the thought of seeing you so soon - Am not I? No not if you come with the expectation of sending me to Brooklyn - I have not the slightest wish to go & say decidedly that I shall not this season ~~it is~~ - Mother as I said before wants to go in ^{May or} June & will I hope whether you come soon or wait to enjoy the Spring as you ought to do if you wish - This day's wind would ^{have} made you so homesick you would never forgive me for hinting a word of your return. I have a plan to propose to Mr & Mrs Lambert - that is to go South in May & returning take you up the Hudson & home any way they please - they must - they shall if I have any influence - Maria & I can take care of the children & have a nice time - It (the whole plan) would give me more pleasure than any thing I can think of - Then father & mother & Mr & Mrs King shall go, & we will ride out into the country & visit our friends who shall board at some pleasant farm house some 8 or 9 miles into the country, as often as Edw'd feels disposed to carry us which I predict will be often. - Edw'd to keep Lizzy awake & give her a few minutes after 9 o'clock has invited her to play backgammon. She is provoked at her want of success & left in a childish pet - Edw'd crowing & she scolding - one would almost believe her to be really angry - so well does she act the spoiled child - By the way Lucy is in some danger of being spoiled, having been punished two or three days in succession for the same fault running away without leave. poor little thing, I fear she will not leave us as good as she came - Love only can govern her & that we have in too small a quantity to meet every emergency - The other day she said "Mrs Whitney has not winter gone" - "Yes" - "Then why don't Miss Anne come home" - She has a memory for something after all - we must not despair of it. - 10 o'clock - Lizzy will almost die - good night dearest tomorrow I will write a little before breakfast that you may possibly get this before Monday.

alas for my good resolutions - Oversleeping 1/2 hour, I have been an
hour & a half behind hand all the morning - & now when I ought
to be dressing or dressed I sit down in my dist to answer some
more of your questions if this horrible pen will allow - ~~either~~
in the first place though, let me tell you - if my answers continue to
displease, you must not ask the questions - how can they be otherwise
than true when the truth itself is so, & say nothing of the dingy medium
through which you know when you ask it must pass - But this is a
heavenly blue day, on the south side of the house at least - so I have
put my plants out of the window & seated myself where it may shine
straight into my heart with my back to the north, that the clouds
of dust chasing each other up street may not come between me & the morning.
Uncle Charles has been in this morning well & happy to get Mr Wain back again.
Grandmother & rest very well. I hope soon to go up to see them - A few the
months ago  my only grandmother at five miles distance is most
sad. I cannot tell you when Allston will enter West point, but think the year
as at Cambridge begins in August. He is now at home trying to restore life to
an arm almost paralyzed by the carelessness of a country doctor in bleeding him.
We have not heard the particulars, but hope as we hear it is better that a threat
and insuperable objection to his going will soon be entirely removed. I forget whether
I told you of Wm's good fortune & his father's consequent joy. He has gone into an
insurance office as clerk & boy with a salary of 250 dollars the first year & the
prospect of one of the best clerkships in a few years if he succeed in this. It has
as you may suppose given new life to his father, & gladdened us all. I contend that
the French saddle is a good one & hereby give you its explanation. My grand abbe'
plain & 'apetite' a treasure Paris sans soupes. You have probably seen in the
papers accounts of the terrible fire at Dragou. Mr Hawthorne's mill was the only
one which escaped destruction. I will send this to day that you may get it on Monday
for useful as they are, my letters seem to be looked for with interest. Actual evil, in

not in your estimation so bad as I suppose - I will begin another to day or tomorrow which you shall have as soon as you ask for it, not in so many words, but by letting me hear from you with forgiveness of what of blunders may appear to have crept into this against my will & which I can assure you I do not feel, & an honest avowal of your wishes respecting ~~the~~ time of your return - All I want is that you shall do what is most pleasant to yourself & will give most pleasure to John & Margaret. I can live a month or more if necessary, longer without you & promise too to behave better than I have done this month past - to write almost every day if sun shine somewhere, most



Mrs Jane E. Weston
Care of South Westing & Co
New York.

probably in my own heart, where I know you will be most glad to hear of it. & if the east wind flows I will walk west & back home & so cheat it of its tax upon my good humour. Give a great deal of love to James - I hope to write to him next week - Love also to John & Margaret & thanks to John for a Tribune which was some 3 or 4 weeks reaching me. How did you like Miss S's poem? Mother says 'are you going to eat beans to day?' to be sure I am - & so must wait or I shall not be ready.